MRS PEPYS
HER BOOK

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THE personalities of those whose lives have made interesting reading for posterity are usually reflected in many contemporary opinions and recollections, and these not only serve to extenuate certain circumstances, but they also embody a decorative material eminently helpful to the biographer.

Thus Mrs. Pepys is a singularly lonely and defenceless figure, for we are forced to view her solely through the eyes of one whose judgments often erred by reason of his own defects of character.

Samuel Pepys was an egoist, a keen observer, a lover of minutiæ; nowhere is this more apparent than in references to his wife. Therefore a recital, however simple and unadorned, of her characteristics and surroundings, may constitute a humble yet essential portion of Pepysiana.

THE Diary of Samuel Pepys, M.A., F.R.S., Clerk of the Acts, and Secretary to the Admiralty, has created for us a stage crowded with colour and incident; nowhere else do we find so enthralling a show or so buoyant a company. Much of its charm lies in the fact that nothing is hidden from us, for the Master Showman has little mercy and presents his players in scenes and in attitudes which are often very detrimental to their dignity.

The chief of his victims is Mrs. Pepys; no matter how dishevelled or tearful she may be, it is her fate to be kept ever lurking in the shadows, awaiting the call to come forward and contribute to the piece. It must be admitted, however, that such lack of ceremony renders the entertainment more piquant.

Not only do we gain a deeper insight into a peculiarly feminine temperament, but her extensive repertoire of characters and moods, assumed and discarded with astonishing facility, makes us anticipate her entries with increasing enjoyment.

Indeed so innumerable are her appearances

that our impression of her is apt to become confused. The endeavour of the present work is to present her in a more ordered and sustained *rôle,* allowing her time to make herself better known to her audience and, when the curtain is rung down, it is hoped that she will have gained some new and sympathetic friends.

MRS PEPYS HER BOOK

I

HER BIRTH AND MARRIAGE

Mrs. Pepys's life is divided into three periods, two of which remain in the greatest obscurity. The most detailed is the middle one of 1660 to 1669, when she was the wife of Samuel Pepys, Clerk of the Acts of the Navy Board.

Of the fifteen years she lived as Elizabeth St. Michel, knowledge is confined to a few facts concerning her parentage, and equally scanty are the particulars pertaining to the last few months of her life, when she travelled abroad with her husband and return to England to die. . . .

Her father was Alexander Marchant, Sieur de St. Michel, son of the High Sheriff of Bauge, in Anjou, and a member of a rich and well-connected family. Elizabeth was fully aware of her good birth, and on one occasion angered Samuel by calling him a "pricklouse", an unfair reflection upon the fact that he was the son of a tailor. Her brother Balthazar was likewise proud of his

name, and stipulated for an employment ". . . that may not stain his family. . . ."

Monsieur St. Michel entered the German service, and when he was twenty-one became a Protestant, an act which was to change the whole course of his life, for he was disinherited by his father and also lost the reversion of a fortune from a wealthy uncle. He came to England in the retinue of Queen Henrietta Maria, but was dismissed from his post of Gentleman Carver owing to his refusal to attend Mass.

His wife, who married him in spite of the disapproval of her relations, was Dorothea, daughter of Lavinia and Matthew Pennefather of Gort, and widow of Thomas Fleetwood. She was closely connected with the Kingsmills, a family of considerable worth and consequence, who had resided at Basingstoke, Hants, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century; they had received a grant from the Royal Mill there, from which they derived their name.

In 1601-1602, Francis Kingsmill served in Ireland under Sir George Carew, and acquired lands at Ballybeg Abbey, Co. Cork. He was knighted at Dublin in 1603.

It was also through her mother that Mrs. Pepys claimed descent from the Cliffords of Cumberland, ". . . and consequently," says Dr. Doran, " from Henry VII, whose daughter Mary, after being Queen of France, espoused the Duke of Brandon, and from the latter union had issue those two daughters, one of whom became mother of Lady Jane Grey, and the other became wife and mother in the honoured household of the Great Cumberland Cliffords. When Aladdin, the tailor's son of Bagdad, married that sweet princess with the never-to-be-remembered name, two wider extremes scarcely met than when Samuel joined hands with Elizabeth de St. Michel, who brought the blood of Tudor to mingle with that of Pepys."

Lord Braybrooke noted that there was no evidence whatever for such an assumption, and subsequent research has confirmed that statement.

After the marriage, Madame St. Michel accompanied her husband to France in an endeavour to regain some of his property. The expedition proved a failure, and moreover they were taken prisoner by the Dunkirkers.

They then came to live either in or near Bideford, in Devonshire, where, on October 23rd, 1640, Elizabeth was born. She had a curious childhood, full of poverty and unrest, for her father was often abroad earning his bread as a soldier. It seems possible that some portion of her early years was spent in Somerset; besides the reference on her memorial there is the instance of her evidently revisiting that county and showing herself to be ". . . mightily joyed thereat".

Elizabeth and her mother lived for a time in Paris, where she was placed in a nunnery of the Ursulines; her father's religious scruples would not permit her to remain, however, and she was removed after a stay of less than a fortnight.

The St. Michels came once more to England, where Elizabeth met and married Samuel Pepys, a young man of twenty-two who had proceeded to a B.A. degree at Cambridge in 1653-1654, but who had no settled position in the world.

Nothing is known of their first meeting or of their courtship. As to the former, a probable theory is that Madame St. Michel and her daugh-

ter patronized Samuel's father, John Pepys, the tailor, and frequently visited the shop in Salisbury Court. There is even confusion regarding the actual date of the marriage, Samuel referring to his wedding night as having been celebrated on October 10th instead of the date mentioned in the registers of St. Margaret's, Westminster.

The notice declares that a marriage had taken place between "Samuell Peps of this parish Gent. and Elizabeth De Snt. Michell of Martins in the ffields Spinster. Published October 19th, 22nd, 29th (1655), and were married by Richard Sherwin, Esqr., one of the Justices of the Peace of the Cittie and Lyberties of Westmr. December 1st. (Signed) Ric. Sherwin."

It has been suggested that, considering the youth and the unsettled prospects of the pair, Elizabeth may have continued to live with her parents for a while, and then joined her husband in the following October, 1656.

Events in Mrs. Pepys's married life were mostly ruled by Samuel's affairs; on the whole she led a cloistered, domestic existence which held nothing more exciting than the fulfilment of her essentially feminine desires for diversion and

self-adornment. For a moment she may emerge from her quiet corner—she stands behind the Queen's chair, she is mirrored in the admiring gaze of a Royal Duke, she kisses Nell Gwynn, and then she retires to her shining kitchen and her chintz-hung closet.

War and invasion, fire and plague, pass her by like shadows as she laces her petticoat and makes her pies, her mind busy with the bauble she will buy to-morrow. . . .

The match gave great satisfaction to her parents, for Samuel was a strict Protestant; also he possessed an influential kinsman, Sir Edward Mountague, later created Earl of Sandwich, and Samuel's "first cousin, one remove".

Their hopes of Sir Edward's patronage were fully realized; he gave Samuel his first chance to gain a livelihood, employing him as his confidential agent, and it was in Sir Edward's house in London that the young couple commenced house-keeping together. They were very humble and very grateful, Mrs. Pepys performing the most menial tasks and, in later years, Samuel became very sentimental when recalling ". . . how she used to make coal fires, and wash

my foul clothes with her own hand for me, poor wretch, in our little room at my Lord Sandwich's."

Perhaps Sir Edward's kindness was partly inspired by the pretty face of young Mrs. Pepys. He called her "a great beauty", and indeed, both at Court and at a fashionable wedding at Gore House, none surpassed her in loveliness.

She appears to have been dark and of a pale complexion, for Samuel disliked her habit of wearing false "white locks", and also he was pleased to see how cleverly an artist had depicted her "dead colour". The "St. Katherine" portrait of her by Hales shows us a rather voluptuous beauty, with large eyes and a small pouting mouth. . . .

It seems possible that, as well as acting as Mountague's agent, Samuel was employed as a clerk in the office of the Receipt of the Exchequer. His financial affairs were gradually improving and the future was full of promise, when in March, 1658, he became seriously ill, and underwent an operation for the stone at his cousin Turner's house in Salisbury Court.

A year later, in June, he went with Sir Edward

Mountague to the Sound to negotiate peace between Denmark and Sweden.

January, 1660, found him living as a householder in Axe Yard, Westminster; also Elizabeth was provided with a servant.

In March he was appointed Secretary to the Generals of the Fleet, and accompanied Sir Edward on the expedition to Holland which restored Charles II to the throne.

Before leaving England he had taken the precaution of making his will, wherein he bequeathed all his possessions to Elizabeth with the exception of his books, which were to go to his brother John; the French books, however, were to be given to his wife.

While he was away, Elizabeth lodged with some old friends of her husband's—the Bowyer family—at Huntsmore in Buckinghamshire. From there she wrote very lovingly to Samuel, and expressed a wish to be in her own home again. He returned to London early in June, and during that month obtained his warrant for the office of Clerk of the Acts of the Navy.

The many dignified and responsible offices which Samuel held in later life prove how well

he deserved Sir Edward's early favours. The following is an extract from Mr. Arthur Ponsonby's *Samuel Pepys:*

"A seventeenth century *Who's Who,* issued, say, in the last decade of that century, would tell us of a man educated at St. Paul's and Magdalene College, Cambridge, M.A., J.P., F.R.S., M.P., author, composer. Clerk of the Exchequer, Clerk of the Acts, Clerk of the Privy Seal, Secretary of the Admiralty, President of the Royal Society, Governor of Christ's Hospital, Governor of St. Thomas's Hospital, Master of Trinity House, Master of the Clothworkers Company, Recreation, Music, Book-collecting."

2

HER RELATIONS

I

Mrs. Pepys was a frequent visitor at the house in Salisbury Court where old John Pepys carried on the business of a tailor. No doubt his wares formed the chief attraction; we know he sold her a muff and mantle and that he persuaded her to buy material costing twenty-six shillings a yard, and also some rich lace.

In August, 1661, John Pepys settled at Brampton, near Huntingdon, the small estate having been left to him by his brother Robert. During the following years Mrs. Pepys spent many weeks there, but these so-called holidays were never particularly happy, for old Mrs. Pepys was very infirm and childish (and perhaps was not very refined, having been "Washmaid to my Lady Veere"), and Paulina, Mrs Pepys's sister-in-law, was a plain, discontented girl. Old John was constantly worried with family and financial matters and was therefore short-tempered and critical.

Such a household was singularly unfitted to entertain a nervous, impulsive person like

Elizabeth, and it is not surprising to learn that her visits provoked much quarrelling and dissension, and that she occasionally showed unwillingness to go there.

She was on more amiable terms with her brothers-in-law, Thomas and John, sometimes visiting the former at his tailor's shop in Fleet Street. He died in March, 1664.

John often stayed with the Pepys when he was a scholar at St. Paul's, a Sizar at Cambridge and later when about to take Orders; Elizabeth grew rather tired of his presence, but ultimately Samuel was able to write that she ". . . loves him mightily as one that is pretty harmless". He did not obtain a preferment. In 1673, when Samuel became Secretary of the Admiralty, he was given the post of Joint Clerk of the Acts. He died in 1677.

Elizabeth was frequently brought into contact with her husband's innumerable uncles and aunts and cousins, a curiously mixed crowd which included an M.P., a turner, an innkeeper and a butcher, all of whom were treated by Samuel with either a condescending good-nature or an impatient disdain.

There was a certain amount of intimacy with the Wights, though Uncle Wight seems to have been rather an eccentric person, judging by his behaviour to Mrs. Pepys with regard to the necessity of her providing Samuel with an heir.

Then there was Roger Pepys, Barrister and member for Cambridge, who had two pretty and pleasant daughters named Barbara and Elizabeth. His second wife was a widow Dickenson, whom Samuel described as ". . . a wonderful, merry, good-humoured, fat, but plain woman. . . ."

The favourite cousin was Mrs. Jane Turner, mother of the witty Theophila and the charming Betty, and wife of John Turner, Sergeant-at-law and Recorder of York. She was an obliging and good-natured woman, providing Samuel with an excellent balsam for an injured thumb and also giving shelter to that strange pet of the Pepys's—an eagle. When she went to live in the North they promised to write to her once a month.

II

The St. Michels are imbued with a certain picturesque quality which is evident in even

their direst straits. Elizabeth inherited a great deal of her father's happy-go-lucky philosophy, and her untidy and forgetful ways were but natural results of her early environment.

She was a very dutiful daughter, and the many calls on her time after her marriage did not prevent her from paying her parents frequent visits. No doubt she took them all kinds of useful odds and ends from her larder and clothes cupboard, as on the occasion when she made them a present of neats' tongues, apples and wine.

The father and mother lived in the greatest poverty, so that sometimes she refused to tell her husband where they lodged. She usually visited them after the mid-day dinner, Samuel taking her in his coach or boat and leaving her in Westminster, Covent Garden, or Charing Cross, where ever it was that her nomadic parents happened to be living.

Of Monsieur St. Michel's many landlords we have details of only one, a Monsieur Prin of Charing Cross, who was an excellent performer on the trumpet marine.

Poor Monsieur St. Michel endeavoured to attain a greater prosperity by constantly devising

schemes and inventions of an altruistic order, one being "a way to prevent and cure smoaking chimneys". Also he tried to purify water and mould bricks, and drew the King's attention to the fact that he had discovered the gold and silver mines of King Solomon.

In the meanwhile, however, he had to exist on four shillings a week from the French Church—about twenty pounds being the extent of his annual income. This penury engendered in Samuel a feeling of impatience tempered by pity, and led to his sending his father-in-law occasional sums of money, and to employing him in the ruling of papers for Pursers' Books.

We know little of Madame St. Michel beyond the fact that on Monday mornings, when she knew Samuel would be out, she sent to her daughter for gifts of clothing, etc., and that once she pawned her son's possessions and went to Flanders for a holiday. The St. Michels were very grateful for Samuel's charity and Madame prayed earnestly for him when his sight became impaired. . . .

Elizabeth's brother, Balthazar, was specially obliged to Samuel, for the latter obtained for him

a place in the Duke of Albemarle's Guards, and later, that of a Muster Master in the Fleet. In 1686 he was Resident Commissioner of the Navy at Deptford and Woolwich, but at first he was as careless and as improvident as the rest of the family. He was fond of dress and, when possible kept a servant, though he did not hesitate to borrow from a serving maid.

It was supposed that his wife possessed a considerable sum of money; it was discovered, later, however, that the lady's professed wealth had been merely a ruse to secure a husband. They went to Holland to seek their fortune, but soon returned to profit by the opportunities afforded by their prosperous relative in the Navy Office.

Mrs. Balty was neither young nor handsome; she possessed one accomplishment, however, being a fairly proficient performer on the Base Viall. She gradually forsook her original *rôle* of childish simplicity and showed herself to be "a very witty, subtle jade", and she likewise quarrelled with her mother-in-law, who accused her of staying out late at night and of painting her face—crimes indulged in when her husband was at sea.

3

HER HUSBAND

SAMUEL and Elizabeth were so entirely different in temperament that scarcely a day passed without a quarrel; yet there existed between them an affection which triumphed over the most serious deceits and disagreements.

In order to gain a clear and unbiased understanding of Elizabeth as a wife we must study Samuel as a husband, for his was so complex a nature that it would have been difficult for any woman to have lived happily with him.

In equal prominence with his industry, his miserliness and his sensuality was his love of beauty and learning. As regards the latter, he was tremendously ambitious for himself and for others. He was interested in science, and he was a connoisseur, an author, a bookman, a musician and a composer, but he displayed diligence rather than brilliance in these artistic pursuits, and, as is often the case with an indifferent performer, he possessed a marked faculty for destructive criticism. Thus he was very im-

patient with Elizabeth's slow progress in music, and he did not hesitate to bully her with regard to her ill-written letters, and her failings as a *raconteuse*.

Combined with these scholarly tastes was a disturbing curiosity in domestic affairs; the most experienced housekeeper could not have been more anxious for the good appearance and the comfort of her home than was Pepys, his interest ranging from the amount of soap and candles used in the kitchen to the fashionable folding of a table napkin. This was partly due to his love of money, for while never neglecting an opportunity to display his importance, he never forgot that the pence make the pounds, and noted every detail for fear of waste.

Mrs. Pepys also had her share of pride, but it was of an essentially childish and feminine kind, and she greatly disliked the forethought and care necessary for the successful maintenance of a home. It must be admitted that Samuel was often justified in his grievances. She was untidy and unpunctual, she quarrelled with her maids, she did not hesitate to show ill-temper in company, and there is no doubt that she possessed a

very free tongue, using expressions which daunted even her husband, so that he could not clear them from his memory and was bitterly ashamed. The worst quarrels arose from jealousy. Her knowledge that he would be unfaithful to her under the least provocation, that he would utterly forget her in the presence of another pretty woman, that he would seek temptation rather than avoid it—these things kept her in a continuous state of nervous suspense and irritation. This unhappy distrust was the dominant factor in her life, and intensified every other smaller annoyance.

She was unaware of most of her husband's amorous escapades, but her suspicions caused many angry scenes, and at these times Samuel was nearly always cowed into a conciliatory attitude.

On all other occasions he played the tyrant; if her clothes or her housekeeping did not please him, or if she contradicted him in some small matter, then she was bullied in the grossest manner. Once he gave her a black eye, and another form of correction was to pull her nose, a punishment she once tried to apply to him,

only rendering it more emphatic by using red-hot tongs.

One of her greatest grievances was that he allowed her so little liberty in going out and in the choosing of her friends. This was partly due to jealousy and partly to meanness; Elizabeth was very resentful of the former feeling, and never lost an opportunity of taunting him with his weakness, even making him read a letter of Sir Philip Sidney's on the subject. Sometimes she wrote him little notes expressing her discontent, and one of these so angered Samuel that he burnt all but the first of his love letters to her.

The house resounded with the master's robust personality. It was often full of workmen carrying out his schemes of alteration and improvement; friends and acquaintances of all kinds and conditions were in and out, busy with his artistic and business concerns. There was a great deal of argument and loud talk and laughter; and at all times and seasons there was the sound of music —of violin and thearbo, of flute and spinet and flageolet. Early in the morning and late at night Samuel practised his viall, the foot-boy his lute; the waiting woman played her triangle and

harpsichord, and sometimes there would be an evening concert with its robust medley of voices and strings.

Everywhere was a sense of expectancy and unrest, all emanating from the inquisitive and domineering Samuel. To keep pace with such a man required great physical vigour and a certain mental placidity.

Now, Mrs. Pepys was not a very healthy woman; certain symptoms seem to indicate that she suffered from pyorrhœa.

In May, 1661, she endured much pain from an abscess, and in November, 1663, a severe illness terminated in a fistula. Her adviser in medical matters was Thomas Hollier. In 1638 he had been appointed surgeon for scald heads at St. Thomas's Hospital; in 1644 he was chosen, in place of Edward Molins, surgeon for the cutting of the stone, and in 1665 he was a second warden for the Barber Surgeons' Company. He appears to have been a genial person, and often dined at Seething Lane, for Samuel enjoyed hearing his tirades against the Church of Rome and also "His story of his love and fortune, which hath been very good and very bad in the world, well

worth hearing." Occasionally he came in too festive a mood, as when, being a little "fuddled", he would only talk Latin and laugh.

What caused her death is not known. It may have been typhoid fever or it is possible that it was septic pneumonia arising from septic foci in the mouth. . . .

Altogether it may be said that she suffered much pain during her short life, and her ill-temper was frequently caused by ill-health.

4

HER HOME

THE increasing prosperity of the Pepys was nowhere more evident than in the house in Seething Lane, for throughout the time they lived there together there were constant alterations and improvements. Samuel would devote whole days to seeing that a room was well cleaned and arranged to his taste, or to watching his workpeople, and often the painters and plasterers, the joiners and the upholsterers, would be there until late at night, their employer spurring them to greater efforts by "merry discourse" and judicious refreshment, he himself forgetting his hunger and ignoring Mrs. Pepys's frequent summons to the table.

She did not share this enthusiasm. For her these frequent improvements entailed much work and sulky maids; it meant that beds had to be made up on the floor and meals sent in from the cook-shop; above all she was kept indoors, away from the tempting shops and the playhouse and the gossip of her friends. Samuel liked to see her busy—for he knew that the

work kept him free from expense and from jealousy.

Poor Elizabeth, with her untidiness and her forgetful ways, showed to the worst advantage at such times. As well as being incompetent she became rebellious, causing Samuel to note that he was "vexed to see that she do not retain things in her memory that belong to the house as she ought, and I myself do."

The first alterations consisted of making a new cellar entrance and coal place; then stairs were built to go up out of the parlour, floors were relaid, and finally another storey was added to the house. . . .

The hall door was ornamented with a knocker of a fashionable pattern, and opened on to an entry which had been considerably enlarged by including in it the foot-boy's room. It was lit by candles in pewter sconces.

After the addition of the extra storey the dining-room was upstairs; it was wainscotted and hung with pictures, amongst them being the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Pepys; there was also a fine mirror. Later, a famous landscape artist was commissioned to fill four panels

with paintings of the Royal Palaces at Greenwich, Whitehall, and Windsor, and a view of Rome. An important feature of the room was the big cupboard furnished with handsome plate.

The parlour decorations were gilded, and it was hung with green serge.

Samuel's closet or study was a very important place, as it served occasionally as a with-drawing room. The first he had was small, and was furnished with the former hangings of the dining-room, which were of green serge and gilt leather. Later, a window was made to open out upon the leads, and it was transformed into the "little dining-room".

Another room was then appropriated for the study, and a window in it was enlarged. It became one of the handsomest in the house. In spite of the new window it was still rather dark, and its purple hangings were thought too sombre, so the wall over the chimney-piece was covered with looking-glass to brighten it. The purple hangings were then put in the waiting-woman's room, and were replaced by tapestry, the "Suite of Apostles" which cost eighty-three

pounds. In the study were the presses which held Samuel's fine collection of books; and it was hung with maps and prints and pictures, the two last depicting favourite subjects—sea-pieces and views of famous cities.

Elizabeth's closet or boudoir was a very attractive place; that, too, was upstairs, and through the open window on quiet summer afternoons would be wafted many pleasant homely sounds—the cooing of pigeons in the yard, an occasional peal from the bells of All Hallows and St. Olave's, the drowsy murmur from the city. It had hangings of printed Indian calico or chintz, and its mantelpiece must have been very handsome, for one of Samuel's colleagues at the Navy Office had it copied for his dining-room.

Nearly all the chimney-pieces in the house were new, the one in the dining-room being specially ornate and massive, and some were fitted with Dutch tiles.

We have few details concerning the furniture in Elizabeth's closet. She was given two " stands " and a hanging shelf, a " fine St. George in alabaster ", and no doubt she would place

there a New Year's gift of a pretty walnut cabinet, and her collection of shells.

Mr. and Mrs. Pepys's bed-chamber had red hangings which were subsequently exchanged for blue ones, the former being put in Samuel's dressing-room. It was hung with "paper pictures" and a map of Paris, and had a green bed and chairs covered with green Turkey work.

Much time was spent upon the leads of the house; here they took exercise or rested, enjoyed music, and often ate their meals.

They had a varied assortment of pets, including a starling, a blackbird, turtle-doves, and cages of canaries, and, most surprising of all, an eagle: the four-footed pets included a cat, a monkey, and Elizabeth's little dog.

5

HER HOUSEKEEPING

THE household in Seething Lane was astir very early in the morning.

A large bell hung outside the master's bedroom door, and this was used to rouse the maids. Samuel himself was frequently up at four and five o'clock, indulging in an hour's music practice before the day's business began. Such early rising did not shorten the hours of domestic work, for the master would return late at night and find a maid scrubbing or washing. On one occasion a cook-maid was cleaning the yard and kitchen at six in the morning, not having yet gone to bed, and the reason the maids saw the first flames of the Great Fire was that they were sitting up till three o'clock in the morning preparing dinner for the next day.

Wash days were especially arduous, for the girl was expected to be at her tub two hours after midnight, Mrs. Pepys not retiring to rest in order to call her.

In their more humble days, when Mrs. Pepys kept only one maid and worked with her,

Samuel went to bed leaving the two still washing, though the bell-man had announced that it was "past one of the clock, and a cold, frosty, windy morning." In later years the soiled things were sometimes taken across the river to the Whitsters (linen bleachers).

It was necessary that care should be taken over such work because Samuel had the keeping of his own linen, and nothing annoyed him more than creased bands or a crumpled table-cloth. . . .

There was a great deal of scrubbing and cleaning; the master would have a floor washed three times before it was considered clean; then there was a large amount of silver and pewter to be kept bright, and much massive carving which required a diligent duster.

That which constantly demanded all Elizabeth's skill and attention was the cooking, for food played a tremendously important part in Samuel's life.

Elizabeth was a good cook, and suffered no qualms about killing her live stock, dispatching pigeons and turkeys with equal efficiency, and she was capable of dressing and serving up a dinner consisting of "a dish of marrow bones,

a leg of mutton, a loin of veal, a dish of fowl, three pullets, and two dozen of larks all in a dish; a great tart, a neat's tongue, a dish of anchovies; a dish of prawns and cheese." One of her specialities was *bœuf à la mode;* she also made excellent "marmalet of quinces". She was very careful with her pastry, devoting a day to her baking, and when not doing it herself she would sit up till four o'clock in the morning to superintend the making of Christmas pies.

Occasionally she became careless and forgetful, and there ensued angry scenes when the meat was burnt or a sauce was too sweet, but on the whole all were very well fed, and Samuel could generally count on his dinner being a good one. The latter was the principal meal of the day, the master's breakfast usually consisting of a "morning draught" at a tavern.

Supper offered such delicacies as "a hundred of sparrowgrass and a little bit of salmon" or "a rabbit and two little lobsters." They duly partook of the food prescribed for certain times and seasons, eating fritters on Shrove Tuesday, plum porridge at Christmas, and Lenten fare

consisting of sugar sops and fish, pease porridge, apple pie, and wiggs.

Outwardly the Pepys lived very handsomely but Samuel constantly impressed upon his wife the need for economy, being afraid that she would ". . . forget by degrees the way of living cheap and under sense of want." When alone they often dined or supped off one single, plebeian dish, as when they enjoyed three eels, pease porridge, hog's harslet or tripe.

She was supposed to keep a strict account of her household expenses, and these "kitchen books" were periodically checked by her husband with disastrous results, as when he discovered that she had been laying aside money to buy a necklace, and that she was twenty shillings out in her reckonings.

The kitchen, apart from wine, fire, candles, soap and other things, cost a little over thirty shillings a week; another time the house-keeping came to seven pounds a month. . . .

When they entertained their friends they spared neither pains nor expense. Mrs. Pepys rose at dawn to go a-marketing, Samuel visited the pewterers in order to enrich the appearance

of his table, and procured music "the best in town". A man was specially engaged to lay the cloth and to place the table napkins in fashionable shapes, while another came to prepare the food. Each dish was served separately, and eaten off silver plates.

There were good fires and plenty of candles, and sometimes the office was cleared for dancing. Then before leaving, the guests were regaled with cold meat and sack posset, or a Christmas draught of ale and apples.

All of this was a great change since the days of their early married life when on such occasions Samuel himself laid the cloth and looked to the fires, and Elizabeth made her tarts and larded her pullets at eleven o'clock the night before the party.

6

HER HOUSEHOLD

THE ever increasing income involved new responsibilities, amongst them being the necessity for a larger household. The latter, if lending a greater importance, also required a vigilance and a control sadly lacking in Mrs. Pepys. The result was that the house in Seething Lane saw a succession of domestics of varying abilities and dispositions, most of whom made a stay of short duration.

Elizabeth, often ill, always excitable, and suspicious of Samuel's amorous propensities, was totally unfitted to deal with such a class; at one time she would be too familiar, at another too quick-tempered. Samuel was occasionally inveigled into passing judgment on the heated discussions between mistress and maid, but his sense of justice often forced him to favour the latter.

The maids were severely punished for their faults, reproofs, being emphasized with "bastings" with a broom, boxes on the ear, and even with kicks. Such incidents, however, were quickly forgotten and, on the whole, there

existed a most democratic intercourse between parlour and kitchen, the master frequently indulging in what he termed "merry discourse" with his maids. The girls often accompanied master and mistress on visits to the theatres or into the country, and there are many pleasant accounts of such festivities, as of that summer afternoon spent at Vauxhall, when Elizabeth and the maids walked in the gardens and gathered pinks, and then adjourned to partake of powdered beef and cakes and ale.

At Christmas time, also, she permitted and took part in "gambols" below stairs, and on Twelfth Night the household received money to buy a cake.

Wages, too, were occasionally supplemented, a cook-maid receiving sixpence for serving up a good dinner, and on another occasion, at the death of her brother, a girl was given twenty shillings and wine for the funeral.

There were several Marys, three Nells, three Janes, and two Susans. We hear of the plain-sounding Hannah, Sarah, Bridget, Besse and Matt, and the more ornamental Alce and Luce; also of two Dolls and a Jinny.

The three Janes were outstanding characters in the household. The first, Jane Wayneman, had been with Mrs. Pepys in the house in Axe Yard. She went to Seething Lane, left and then returned and stayed until February, 1663.

Mrs. Pepys was on very familiar terms with Jane, even to the extent of dressing the maid's hair. Jane was apparently a somewhat mischievous person, mocking a neighbour over the garden wall, and committing the astonishing prank of cutting off a carpenter's moustache. Two of her brothers became successively Samuel's foot-boy, the younger sharing, to a marked degree, her lively disposition.

Jane Gentleman's father was a well-known cook, and she was remarkable for the number of quarrels she caused between her master and mistress.

Jane Birch, except for one interval, stayed a long time, only leaving when she married Tom Edwards, Samuel's "boy". She was capable and good-natured, and when well dressed looked a most graceful servant. The course of her love with Tom did not run very smoothly, for after

gaining her affections, his own cooled perceptibly, and poor Jane was very unhappy. However, they had a merry wedding at Islington, and Samuel gave forty pounds to Tom and twenty pounds to Jane, the latter's share being further supplemented by Mrs. Pepys, who, with a bitter knowledge of her own dependence, gave Jane another twenty pounds.

Later, Mr. and Mrs. Pepys and Mr. and Mrs. Edwards dined together at the Cock Tavern, and we also find Mrs. Pepys helping her former maid to cut out linen for the new home. Tom died twelve years after, and Samuel's influence placed his son at the Blue Coat School.

One of the strangest arrangements was that Samuel made his sister Paulina one of his servants. She had to work hard and was not allowed to sit at table with him. It was all very unsatisfactory and she left after a few months.

Sarah was a great favourite with her master, being tall and well-favoured, and must have been superior to her predecessors for Samuel would have welcomed her as a sister-in-law had she possessed any money. Elizabeth disliked her intensely and dismissed her, but Sarah revenged

herself by spreading abroad malicious gossip concerning her mistress. She went into service with one of Samuel's colleagues at the Navy Office, which caused him to be greatly disturbed in his mind, as he knew his affairs would be known far and wide, so he decided "to endeavour to join the lion's skin to the fox's tail".

Besse was a good cook and of great use at Tom Pepys's funeral, where she dispensed the biscuits and the burnt claret, and later helped to make an inventory of the dead man's possessions. Her worst fault was forgetfulness and for this she was discharged.

Jinny came from the Parish of St. Bride's, and after a very necessary cleansing and reclothing, escaped whilst being shown the way to the bakehouse. She was brought back by the Beadle, her clothes were reclaimed, and she was then dismissed—proceedings unforeseen by the churchwarden who had recommended her.

One of the two Susans was quite a young girl but it appears that she was "a most admirable slut". She was often the scapegoat for the faults of the other maids, once being severely beaten and locked up in the cellar all night because her

companions had allowed "a rogueing Scotch woman" to help them with the work. Nevertheless, when she was ill she was very kindly treated, for Samuel paid a nurse ten shillings a week to look after her, as her mother, a parish sexton's wife, did not dare to have her at home.

The other Susan was "a pretty, willing wench," but a poor cook. She left and then returned, when it was discovered she had become a drunkard, neglecting her work and paying frequent visits to an adjacent tavern, the latter even luring her forth at five o'clock in the morning. She was dismissed again, but came back to claim a neckerchief, which was found being worn by the other maid, Hannah. Hannah was mortified by the discovery and left immediately, which was a great pity, as she was an excellent cook, having served in "great families".

The three Nells were all unsatisfactory. One was lazy and proud, another was "a cross-grained wench", and the third permitted Samuel to indulge in a great deal of "dalliance" with her.

Equally trying were the Marys. Number one chose to live "in a tradesman's house where there

was but one maid"; number two was a good servant but "too high" for Mrs. Pepys; number three was pretty but impudent; number four was incapable; and number five announced that she wished to go "where she might earn something one day, and spend it and play away the next". . . .

Doll number one was "a wench for her tongue", and the other was a "blackmoore" who cooked "mighty well".

Bridget was a thief, Alce could not tolerate reproof, Luce was a drunkard, and Matt was too good-looking for her mistress's peace of mind.

An important member of the household was Samuel's "boy", who acted as his personal servant. After Eliezer came Jane Wayenman's brother, Will, but he turned out to be a thief and his indentures were torn up. Samuel then engaged his brother (we are never told his Christian name) who stayed for a year or two. During that time he was as mischievous and as naughty as it is in a boy's capacity to be. Elizabeth took him to Brampton, but old Mr. Pepys begged that he might not have to house

him a second time. His presence at Seething Lane was productive of much turmoil and vexation, as when he endured several beatings before he confessed that he drank the whey and pulled a pink and set his candle on his bedroom floor. After a severe application of "salt-eel" (rope's end) he ran away, and ultimately another long-suffering master dispatched him to Barbadoes.

His successor was Tom Edwards, destined to be Jane Birch's husband. He had been in the King's Chapel, and could sing anything at sight; he often took part in the "music practices" so beloved by Samuel, who later paid a master to give him lessons on the lute. He was so great a favourite with Mrs. Pepys, that Samuel feared she made him idle.

William Hewer, Samuel's clerk, lived for a year or two with the Pepys. At first he showed no evidences of the worthy and substantial citizen he afterwards became. He stayed out late, gossipped with the maids, wore his cloak like a ruffian and kept his hat on in the house. He was at times personally chastised by his master, and so at last he went to lodge elsewhere,

but he gradually became a very sober and thrifty person, even arousing Samuel's jealousy as regards Mrs. Pepys. Later, Will entertained them in his well-furnished rooms with tarts and custards, and excellent wine and "discourse", and showed still greater proof of his esteem and gratitude by begging Elizabeth to accept a diamond locket which, however, Samuel made her refuse tactfully.

She little knew that a great friendship was destined to exist between her husband and his clerk, for, years later, the famous Mr. Evelyn wrote of Samuel that "When King James II went out of England, he laid down his office, and would serve no more, but withdrawing himselfe from all public affaires, he lived at Clapham with his partner Mr. Hewer, formerly his clerk, in a very noble and sweete place, where he enjoy'd the fruits of his labours in greate prosperity. . . ." It was at Clapham that Samuel died on the 26th of May, 1703.

7

HER WAITING-WOMEN

ELIZABETH's plea of loneliness was ultimately successful in providing her with a waiting-woman; at first Samuel had strongly objected to this innovation, as he thought it would entail great expense, but upon her promising that her woman should cost nothing beyond her meat and wages, he consented, and with characteristic fickleness showed much interest in this dignified addition to his household.

A curious lack of perception made her introduce to the susceptible Samuel these young and pretty women, whom he naturally met on very intimate terms; of course temptation proved too strong to be resisted, and disaster culminated in the overwhelming charms of Deb Willet.

The duties of the waiting-woman were of a very varied nature. She had to take her share of the house-work, act as lady's maid, (being specially accomplished in the dressing of a head), and accompany her mistress on all business and social expeditions. She had to entertain with

her accomplishments of music, dancing and card playing, and likewise perform for her master such duties as combing his hair and washing his ears.

Mrs. Pepys's first experience of such a person was of short duration, Mrs. Gosnell arriving on the fifth of December, 1662, and departing on the ninth, the reason being that her uncle Justice Jiggins required her to come to him three times a week in order that she might transact some business of her mother's, an arrangement which was found to be impossible. Mrs. Gosnell possessed a good voice, and was a clever dancer, accomplishments which induced her to seek her fortune on the stage of the Duke's Playhouse. Some time after, Samuel recognized her amongst the caste in *Hamlet,* her part, however, being a merely decorative one, as she neither danced nor spoke. She then appeared as Pyramene in the comedy of *The Slighted Mayde,* and was considered a great success by her former employer. He also saw her in *The Rivals,* and admired her singing and dancing, despite the fact that she once fell badly out of tune. When the famous Mary Davis left the Playhouse, Gosnell succeeded

her, but is later described as looking homely and singing meanly.

Mrs. Pepys next engaged Mary Ashwell, who stayed about five months. She had taught little children in a school in Chelsea, and at first her manners were considered rather awkward and lacking in respect. In this she rapidly improved, and showed herself accomplished in many things; she could play the harpsichord and the triangle, and Samuel appointed himself as her music master, buying her a Virginal book and instructing her in "the grounds of time". It was during one of these lessons that Mrs. Pepys showed great jealousy, and with good reason, for Samuel was so absorbed in his pupil that he had forgotten that his wife was ill in bed, and feeling bored and lonely. Ashwell was a clever dancer, and Mrs. Pepys was annoyed to find herself much the inferior in this art. The waiting woman could likewise play cards very well, and altogether the mistress saw herself surpassed in many ways. Therefore she was not sorry to have to tell Samuel that Ashwell had stolen some ribbon.

However, the girl was not dismissed, and

accompanied Elizabeth on a visit to Brampton. Here they had violent quarrels, arising from Mrs. Pepys's favourite accusation of lying; blows were exchanged, and Ashwell left, her wages amounting to two pounds ten shillings. Later she was asked to return and dress Mrs. Pepys's hair on the occasion of a visit from Lord Sandwich, and it is pleasant to hear that she bore no malice and was "as merry as ever".

The most satisfactory of these young ladies was Mary Mercer, who stayed at Seething Lane for nearly two years. She was engaged through William Hewer, who appears to have lodged at her mother's house in Crutched Friars, Mrs. Mercer being the widow of a "decayed merchant". Mary Mercer's singing was much appreciated by Samuel, who spent many hours in teaching her his songs. She also played the harpsichord and the viall, and was a good dancer, being a special exponent of the Jigg.

After a time the Pepys became very friendly with Mrs. Mercer, her daughter Anne, and her son, Will. Will was once Mrs. Pepys's valentine, presenting her with a gay-hued missive bearing her name in gold "done by himself".

Elizabeth grew very tired of Samuel's music lessons and duets with her woman; there were many quarrels and misunderstandings, and once Mary returned home, but the tactful Hewer effected a reconciliation. The Great Fire was responsible for her final departure, for during that terrible confusion she went to her mother's, and when followed by her mistress, Mrs. Mercer declared that Mary "was not a prentice girl, to ask leave every time she goes abroad." Later the Pepys wished her to return to them, but she refused. This did not interfere with her friendship with them, for she was a constant visitor to Seething Lane, and was present on nearly every festive occasion there.

Her successor was one Barker, who at first incurred Samuel's displeasure by being very poor and requiring new clothes; she repaid him, however, by appearing much the prettier for her fresh apparel. Her manner of singing also pleased him, though he remarked that her voice was furred for want of practice. She only stayed a few months, being dismissed because of her untruthful ways. She was evidently of an independent disposition, for she announced that

" she had rather be put to drudgery and to wash the house than to live as she did like a gentlewoman." No doubt the maids in the kitchen, gossiping with each other and living close to the cheerful noise and colour of the street, enjoyed life more than the waiting woman in the parlour, petted one moment and slighted the next, and always watched by the jealous eyes of the mistress.

The next waiting-woman to be engaged was Deb Willet, of whom more will be heard later.

8

HER DIVERSIONS

It is interesting to find that Mrs. Pepys was fond of reading. One of her favourite authors was de Scudery; we also hear of her enjoying John Guillim's *Display of Heraldry,* Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* and *Cassandra,* by Gauthier de Costes, Seigneur de la Calprenède. She had her own small library of French books, and borrowed English ones from friends. When her husband's sight became impaired she used to read to him aloud, which he admitted she did very well.

A large portion of her time was passed in the making and buying of her clothes, for she was amply endowed with her sex's traditional love of finery. She followed the fashions very attentively, gaining information from the fine ladies at the theatre and the Court, and from the gay promenade of Gray's Inn Walks. Being a clever needlewoman, she was able to copy and design her own clothes, and was content to spend long hours thus employed, once devoting the whole of a Christmas Day to the making of a petticoat. She and Samuel did not always agree as to cut

and colour, for she was content to follow the fashion whether it suited her or not. He, on the other hand, was most precise and conventional, hating anything artificial or tawdry, and he found great fault with his wife's ill-matched ribbons, low-cut corsage and "false locks", and it appears to have been a long time before he permitted her to wear a black patch.

His love of economy was in constant conflict with his desire that she should equal and even surpass the other women in point of richness and fashion, and this often had the effect of making him more generous. He could not tolerate the fact that all were wearing mohair when Elizabeth was clad in taffeta, and he was bitterly jealous when a neighbour's wife displayed a handsome velvet gown.

Finally it was decided that she should have a yearly income of thirty pounds for her personal expenses, only out of this she had to make Samuel an annual gift of a pair of gloves. The compact was put into writing "in merry terms" and given over to the safe keeping of William Hewer.

She was very fond of jewellery and gradually came to possess about one hundred and fifty

pounds worth, her increased richness being shown by her two pearl necklaces, the first of which cost four pounds ten shillings, and the second, with three rows, eighty pounds.

One of her favourite recreations was to visit Mr. Unthanke, her tailor, who lived in Charing Cross. It must have been a pleasant place in which to pass an hour; besides the attractive wares in the shop, he numbered some of the most famous and fashionable people amongst his customers, one being that great Court beauty, Lady Castlemaine, and Mrs. Pepys was very pleased to be able to buy stuff for a gown similar to that chosen by her ladyship. Mr. Unthanke was a personal friend, Mrs. Pepys being godmother to his child; also he let rooms to lodgers who, according to Samuel, were lively and pretty young women.

Another favourite shopping place was the New Exchange, where were centred all the fashionable seamstresses, lacemen and milliners. It was also a promenade, and offered different places of refreshment, including a whey house. Samuel often took his wife and friends to the Exchange, being a specially good customer around St.

Valentine's Day, when he would buy such delightful things as perfumed or Jessimy gloves, silk stockings, garters, and dressing boxes.

Elizabeth was a frequent visitor at the theatre, going after the mid-day dinner with her husband or her waiting-woman, or with friends. Then there was Bartholomew Fair, where she saw the horse with hoofs like a ram's horns, a goose with four feet, and a cock with three.

There were many sights and shows in the Town, from the glitter and glamour of Whitehall, with its balls and plays and its Presence Chambers, to the Puppet shows and Polichinelli, and such strange freaks as the Bearded Woman and the Fat Children from Ireland.

Eating and drinking also formed a favourite entertainment. Sometimes Mrs. Pepys went to a "French House" where she partook of various native delicacies; or she would visit some tavern famous for a special dish, as for instance when she sampled the pease porridge at the Cock, the pasties at the "Bottle of Hay", and the prawns and lobsters at the Rhenish Wine-house.

On summer evenings Samuel often hired a coach and proceeded on what he called a Grand

Tour—to Islington, Hackney, Kingsland and Bow. Sometimes they would take a meal with them and eat it in the coach, or they would call at an inn, a great favourite being "The King's Head" at Islington which he had known in his boyhood days.

At Islington there were excellent cheese cakes, at Hackney cherries and cream, at Moorfields cakes and ale. Then they would go up the river to Barn Elms, to the Neat Houses at Chelsea or to the Half-way House at Rotherhithe, where there were cowslip fields and Samuel could play at nine-pins.

Barnet and Epsom also afforded a pleasant day's excursion, and Vauxhall was a very gay place, with arbours for refreshments and gardens full of pinks and roses and crowded promenades, all resounding to Jew's trumps, fiddles, and nightingales.

Sometimes Mrs. Pepys joined in the parade round the Ring in Hyde Park, where the world of fashion circled about in order to see and be seen, and afterwards there would be a visit to the Lodge for refreshments in the form of cheese cakes and new milk.

Occasionally she went out on intimate excursions of her own—to have her fortune told by the Gypsies at Lambeth, to gather May-dew for her complexion in the fields at Woolwich, or to watch a masque at a young ladies' school.

In contrast to such feminine diversions it is strange to think that she was a spectator at the ghoulish hanging of Cromwell and Ireton in their shrouds.

9

HER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SAMUEL was very anxious that his wife should possess certain accomplishments; he felt that her talents would gain for him much reflected glory, and so he was content to pay the expensive fees of various masters.

Her dancing lessons, however, were to bring him the greatest anxiety. So severely did he suffer that it seemed as if Providence were requiting him with those very pangs of jealousy he had so often caused. Mr. Pemberton, the dancing master, became a hated enemy, but at first Samuel was merely an interested spectator at the lessons, full of encouragement and admonition to Elizabeth, who was a somewhat slow pupil.

Once he was induced to attempt a Coranto, and before he was aware of it he too had become a pupil and was forced to pay ten shillings. This annoyed him greatly, and, as Elizabeth showed herself more and more absorbed in her lessons, he grew suspicious that such zeal cloaked an increasing infatuation for Mr. Pembleton. He thought he detected a new flightiness, a

grave neglect, and his agitation became boundless and pitiable. He suffered tortures when he heard a lesson in progress, worse pangs when there was a pause; he crept about like a spy, broke in upon them unexpectedly, and listened at the door, and he voiced his suspicions so grossly that at last he felt bound to fine himself half-a-crown each time he reproved her.

Of course he discovered nothing, which betokened to him still greater guile and deceit. He was delighted when the lessons were finished and the hated Pembleton departed, but his anxieties were once more aroused as he feared that she kept up a secret intimacy with the dancing master.

If she dispatched the boy on an errand Samuel thought she was sending a message, and when he found that it was merely for some starch he still remained dissatisfied. Once she wished to go alone to Fenchurch Street and the unhappy Samuel instantly imagined it was for an assignation; the truth was that she had wished to buy a fan unknown to her parsimonious husband.

Mr. Pembleton attended the parish church of St. Olave's, and so for many weeks Samuel's

devotions were considerably disturbed as he tried to discover smiles and signals. However, his fears were set at rest when his wife drew his attention to the pretty Mrs. Pembleton, an act of frankness which once more opened the doors of Seething Lane to the dancing master, for we find him a guest at many of the merry parties there.

Samuel next added arithmetic to her educational curriculum, constituting himself as her instructor, and she learnt addition, subtraction, and multiplication "with great ease and pleasure". Before she was initiated into the mysteries of division she had lessons upon the globes, (the latter were bought specially for her at a cost of three pounds three shillings), and she proved such an interested pupil that part of a Christmas Day was devoted to this subject. Samuel also undertook to instruct her in geography.

She was taught drawing by Alexander Brown, a printseller, and made excellent progress, the exhibition of her pictures forming a staple entertainment for her friends. Commencing with the drawing of eyes she soon delighted Samuel with a work of art depicting the head of a Persian

woman, and later she became fond of creating pictures of a religious character.

Her attempts to learn singing were not very successful; she had a poor ear for music, and her frequent failings to keep in tune made her husband very angry and impatient. She was anxious to please him, being well aware what powerful charms music held for him, and she practised very hard, being most desirous to learn to "trill".

Samuel did not approve of Mr. Goodgroome's method of teaching her; he sang a tune to her over and over again, and then she repeated it with him. To encourage the master to do his best for the pupil Samuel paid him ten shillings for each new song he taught her—a proof of how keen was his desire for her to sing. Later, she attained a fair success with certain songs, and Samuel wrote that it was "a comfort to my very heart."

Mr. Greeting received four pounds to teach her to take out any lesson for herself on the Flageolet. She became a proficient performer on this instrument, and later she and Samuel played many duets together.

10

HER FRIENDS

Mrs. Pepys had the choice of many varied acquaintances, for Samuel was a most sociable person and knew innumerable men and women of every kind and calling. She had no real faculty for friendship however; she was too impulsive; and quick-tempered, and moreover she felt that an extensive circle of friends of her own sex would offer too great a temptation to Samuel.

Again, if she showed the slightest interest or liking for a man her husband became sulkily suspicious, and was always ready to interfere.

An early friend was Catan Sterpin. Later, Catan married a Monsieur Petit who wished "to reform the universities and to institute schools for the learning of all languages, to speak them naturally, and not by rule. . . ." The practical Samuel did not approve of this project and we hear little of Catan after her marriage.

At first Elizabeth was very favourably impressed with the wives of Samuel's colleagues at the Navy Office, especially with Lady Batten, wife of the Surveyor of the Navy Board, but

quarrels gradually arose from various causes, such as the order of precedence in the Navy Pew at St. Olave's, the use of a water cock, and an impudent maid's mockery over the garden wall.

The same uncertain intimacy existed with Lady Pen and her daughter Margaret, the latter being very jealous of Mrs. Pepys's skill in drawing.

There was more friendliness with Mrs. Thomas Turner, wife of the general clerk. She was a great gossip, and provided the Pepys with much knowledge of their neighbours.

Lady Sandwich, wife of Samuel's benefactor, was very kind, urging Samuel to lay out more money on his wife, and it was through her good advice that Elizabeth obtained some rich lace and handsome stuff for a petticoat. She sometimes dined with her Ladyship at the Wardrobe, (Lord Sandwich being Master of the Wardrobe, and responsible for the pageantry on State occasions) and on one occasion she acted as interpreter between a French maid and Lady Sandwich.

The two daughters, Lady Jemima and Lady

Paulina, often came to Seething Lane, where they played cards, or were taken to the Fair or to see the lions at the Tower.

Next to Mary Mercer, her favourite friend appears to have been Mary Batalier, a pretty girl who kept a linen draper's stall in the Royal Exchange. She had a sister called Susan who was also pretty and who sang well, and a brother William, and these young people brought much pleasure into Elizabeth's life. Will was handsome, a good dancer and an entertaining conversationalist, and at first Samuel was doubtful as to whether he should encourage such a person, especially as the latter was commissioned by Mrs. Pepys to buy for her shoes, gloves, and hoods in France, but Will proved useful in bringing him prints from abroad, and he presented Mrs. Pepys with a pretty little dog.

A more humble acquaintance was little Betty Howlett, who had served at her mother's stall in Westminster Hall. Mrs. Pepys would not have regarded her so amiably had she known of Betty's flirtations with Samuel. She does not seem to have suspected this, and when Betty married, Elizabeth joined in the housewarming

and later assisted at the births of her two children.

There was also "good Mrs. Hunt", who taught Mrs. Pepys how to make quince marmalade, and who helped in the removal from Axe Yard to Seething Lane.

There were various other friends of whom it may be said they gave more pleasure to Samuel than to Elizabeth. They were artistic, bohemian, theatrical, and poor, but determined to enjoy life to the full, and they were at all times very ready to profit by the hospitality of Seething Lane, in spite of the dour looks of their hostess. Foremost amongst these was Mrs. Knipp, a clever actress at the King's Playhouse. She could sing with great charm, and Samuel called her "Barbary Allan" because of her effective rendering of that song; it was she who made popular Samuel's song of "Beauty, retire". She lived in very mean lodgings, with a husband who was "an ill, melancholy, jealous looking fool". Despite the fact that he was only a "kind of jockey" she managed to make a very good appearance in the world.

Another sprightly lady was "La Belle

Pierce", wife of the Surgeon to the Duke of York. She was remarkable for her very fine complexion, which, however, she was fond of covering with paint, much to Samuel's annoyance. She lived in a handsome house in Covent Garden, where she entertained in a most lavish style; nevertheless Dr. Pierce was forced to let some rooms to a silk mercer in order to supplement his income.

Mrs. Pepys was very jealous of Mrs. Pierce and Mrs. Knipp, and one day when they visited her she had a serious quarrel with them. Samuel then called a coach and escorted them home, stopping on the way to dine with them at the tavern where he had eaten his wedding dinner—a coincidence which must have made him "mighty" thoughtful. Afterwards there was an apparent reconciliation, though Elizabeth never really liked or trusted either of them.

Then there was Mrs. Clerke, another doctor's wife, very fashionable and witty, and her sister Mrs. Worship, and Mr. and Mrs. Coleman, who were both excellent singers.

Of course Mrs. Pepys had her admirers, amongst them being Lord Sandwich and his son

Lord Hinchingbrooke, but she always remained faithful to her husband, her confidant in these matters being the trusty William Hewer.

Samuel was much perturbed when she renewed her acquaintance with a Mr. Somerset whom she met by chance at the play. He was a young aristocrat whom she had known in France. Later, she saw him at the Exchange and he bought her "a bracelet of rings", and then a "footman in feathers" spoke to her privately and she agreed to an appointment. She must have satisfied Samuel as to its propriety, for there is no further mention of the gentleman.

A great favourite was Mr. Sheres, who had been attached to the Embassy in Spain. He entertained her with stories of his travels, treated her to a delicious dish called an Olio, and was likewise a poet, which, as Samuel jealously remarked, "she do mightily value him for".

She also showed a passing fancy for one Coleman, a pensioner of the King's Guard, with whom she had travelled to Brampton in the coach.

II

HER LATER MARRIED LIFE

Until 1660 Elizabeth's existence had been that of the humblest of housewives; she had shared the work with her servant and, for the sake of economy, had lived in the garret. Money had been scarce for pleasures and for clothes, and she had often been glad to visit her father-in-law in order to eat a good dinner and sit by his fire.

Now all was changed; henceforth the Pepys knew nothing but prosperity.

The very day on which his patent was signed, July 13th, Samuel took her to the Navy Office situated in Crutched Friars and Seething Lane, and showed her the houses belonging to the officers, one of which was to be her future home. She was very pleased with it, and immediately began to prepare for the removal of the goods from Axe Yard. The rain caused some delay, but at last the carts arrived, and Samuel, Elizabeth and a friend followed them in a coach, thus discovering the carters stopping to drink in the Strand. By evening they were installed in their

new home, and the master celebrated the occasion by buying a quarter of lamb for supper. . . .

In the Spring of 1661, during extensive alterations to the house in Seething Lane, Elizabeth stayed with her father-in-law.

In April she saw Charles II go in state from the Tower to Whitehall, and also sat in a balcony in Westminster Hall during the Coronation dinner.

May brought a pleasant visit to Portsmouth where she was shown the fine ship *Montagu* and the house in which Felton murdered the Duke of Buckingham. On their return journey through Petersfield and Guildford they stayed at the Inn and slept in the room lately occupied by Royalty.

In September a family business matter necessitated Samuel paying a visit to Impington and Brampton, and Elizabeth decided to accompany him. She rode a pretty mare and showed herself to be a graceful horsewoman, but the terrible condition of the roads caused her to be thrown twice, resulting in nothing worse, however, than muddy clothes. They slept at Ware and Cambridge and then proceeded to Brampton. After

spending a day or two there they rode to London, through Baldock, Stevenage and Welling.

In December her portrait was painted by Savill.

In 1662 she paid the first of a series of long visits to Brampton, staying from the end of July until September. Also in the two following years she spent many weeks in the country. During the Great Plague of 1665 she made her home with the Sheldons at Woolwich, Mr. Sheldon being Clerk of the Cheque there. His daughter Barbara was a pleasant, good-natured woman, and became one of Elizabeth's favourite friends.

Time passed quite happily at Woolwich. She had Mary Mercer and two of her maids for company, and Mr. Sheldon had a fine garden full of fruit trees where she could play with his dogs and practise her drawing.

Samuel divided his time between Woolwich and Seething Lane; as the Autumn advanced, however, he found it more convenient to stay in Greenwich, where the Navy Office had taken up its quarters, and at his rooms there were many merry parties.

She returned to London in early December, while Samuel stayed in Greenwich until after the New Year.

In February, 1666, he took her to Windsor, with which she showed herself "mightily pleased". During that month she sat to John Hales for her portrait, and was painted in the fashionable pose of St. Katherine (a compliment to Queen Katherine of Braganza). The sittings became very festive occasions, for friends came to admire and to criticize, and also to make music and partake of cakes and ale.

During April she visited Brampton to satisfy herself as to the qualifications of one of "Pauline's" suitors.

On September 2nd the Pepys had planned to give a small dinner party, but at three o'clock that morning the maids came with news of flames seen in the distance. It was the Great Fire of London. There followed days of terrible confusion and fear. Their goods were removed to Bethnal Green, Parmezan cheese, wine, and private papers were buried in the garden; to sleep was impossible, and meals had to be sent in from the cook shop.

Early in the morning of the 5th, Elizabeth raised the alarm that the fire had reached Barking Church, which stood at the end of their lane. Samuel immediately took her with Hewer and a maid by water to Woolwich, carrying with him a large sum of money in gold. They went to Mr. Sheldon's and Elizabeth and the clerk were ordered never to leave the treasure unguarded.

In June, 1667, when there was the fear of a Dutch invasion, she was again put in charge of Samuel's wealth, and was dispatched with her father-in-law to Brampton with one thousand three hundred pounds in a nightbag. Their method of hiding it roused Samuel to great wrath, for they had buried it in the middle of the garden, doing so in daylight.

It was not retrieved until the following October, when the occasion made the excuse for a short holiday.

Elizabeth took her waiting-woman, Deb Willet, and Samuel was accompanied by Will Hewer and a friend. They enlivened the journey with singing and telling tales, and slept at Bishop Stortford. Next day they proceeded to

Cambridge, and on the way viewed the stately house of Audley End, where, in the vast and echoing cellars, Elizabeth and Samuel sang duets. At Cambridge they decided to stay at the Rose, and, after ordering a good supper went to see Trinity College, St. John's Library and King's College Chapel.

Next morning, after giving alms and being regaled with the "town musique" (all of which testified to their importance) the party set out for Brampton.

After much trouble Samuel recovered nearly all his money; the rest of their short stay passed in coach riding and in visiting Lady Sandwich at Hinchingbrooke. Samuel noted that during the whole of the visit his wife carried herself "very high" towards Pall and old Mr. Pepys, which recalled a quarrel on a former holiday there. On the homeward journey they spent a night at Stevenage, hiding the gold, which was in two bags and a basket, underneath the bed in Samuel's chamber. . . .

In January, 1668, Elizabeth planned to have her sister-in-law Pall married from the house in Seething Lane. Pall, however, married her Mr.

Jackson the following month, and neither Samuel nor his wife was present at the ceremony. No doubt Mrs. Jackson was very pleased to be so independent. Her husband derived profit from ". . . malting, and grazing of cattle."

In March, Samuel made his famous speech at the Bar of the House of Commons in answer to the enquiry regarding the presence of the Dutch in the Medway. He completely refuted the allegations made against his colleagues, and gained a great personal success, at which Elizabeth was "overjoyed".

She had been looking forward to keeping a coach, but finally it was decided that the purchase of one should be postponed, and that instead she should go into the country with a friend and also have her closet re-decorated; so in April she went to Brampton accompanied by Deb Willet, a maid, and Betty Turner. Without Pall and old Mrs. Pepys (who had died in 1667) Brampton proved to be more attractive.

From there in June, she and her husband, with Hewer, Deb, and Betty, went on a tour into the West of England. They visited Bedford, Buckingham, Newport Pagnell and Oxford, and

spent a night at Abingdon, seeing something of the famous Custard Fair, and joining in the music and dancing at their Inn. They then set out for Salisbury by way of Hungerford, and on arrival stayed at the George Inn, sleeping in a silken bed.

Next day the party went on horseback to see Stonehenge and later, in their coach, lost their way on the Plain, being forced to shelter in an obscure little ale-house.

They visited Philips Norton and Bath, staying a day or two in the latter place, and testing the merits of the Cross Bath; also a day was spent in Bristol, where they were handsomely entertained by Deb's uncle, Mr. Butts, for he showed them various objects of interest and afterwards invited them to a lunch of venison pasty, strawberries and wine. They returned home by way of Abury, Marlborough, Reading, Maidenhead, and Colnbrook.

In July, Elizabeth was painted by Samuel Cooper. The miniature was a very beautiful one, enclosed in a gold and crystal case.

During August, Samuel found it necessary to pay an official visit to Petersfield. He and his

wife and her woman journeyed to Guildford, where they dined and saw the famous Hospital and Church; they then rode over Hindhead to Liphook and passed the night there. Samuel quickly transacted his business at Petersfield, so they returned to Guildford, but the "Red Lion" was full of company and they had to sleep in a private house. Next day they entertained Aunt and Uncle Wight to dinner at the Inn and then proceeded homewards.

In September, Elizabeth, accompanied by Mary Mercer, Deb and Hewer, went to stay with Roger Pepys at Cambridge, in order to see Sturbridge Fair.

October saw the purchase of the coach; it was covered in leather and held four people. . .

In the same month occurred the great tragedy of Mrs. Pepys's life, an unmistakable discovery of her husband's unfaithfulness to her. It was like a bad dream turning into a reality.

Deb Willet was, as far as we know, the last of the succession of young women she employed to act as her waiting-woman. As has been seen, many caused her annoyance and jealousy, but it was Deb who was destined to be her greatest

enemy. She was a very pretty little thing, and when she came in September, 1667, Samuel was impressed by her good manners and her grave demeanour. She had been at school in Bow for some years and belonged to educated people of means, for beside her uncle Butts of Bristol, there was her aunt Mrs. Hunt, a handsome well-spoken widow with a wide knowledge of fashionable life.

Deb was not musical, but she exercised the greatest fascination over her master, and there were ominous signs that Mrs. Pepys observed this. One of Deb's duties was to comb Samuel's hair, and the process involved many stolen embraces; it was at such a time that they were discovered. Elizabeth's rage knew no bounds—all that night and for many nights afterwards she overwhelmed him with reproaches and denunciations and terrified him by declaring she was a Roman Catholic.

With unbelievable cowardice he at first denied everything, even writing a note to Deb to that effect, but the scared girl confessed all to her mistress, and Samuel agreed to dismiss her. Nevertheless, she remained for nearly three

weeks after the episode, Elizabeth never allowing Samuel to go near her, and even rising with him in the morning and seeing him safely into the street.

He had meant to give the girl a present of forty shillings when she left, but Mrs. Pepys would only pay her ten pounds, the year and half a quarter's wages. So strong was his infatuation, however, that whilst his poor wife was working hard at home putting up the new hangings of a bed-chamber, he endeavoured to discover the girl's destination.

He had heard Elizabeth say that Deb was lodging in the neighbourhood of Whetsone Park with one Dr. Allbon. There was no trace of her there: ultimately, after much trouble, he found means to convey a message to her, and there ensued an amorous interview in a coach.

When this came to Mrs. Pepys's ears her rage was, if possible, more frantic than before, and there followed some terrible scenes; finally William Hewer was called in to act as peace-maker and intermediary.

The result was that Samuel was forced to write an insulting note, which the kindly Hewer

forbore to deliver, merely telling Deb that she must see her master no more. Thereafter Samuel was watched with the keenest vigilance, being accompanied everywhere by either Hewer or his foot-boy.

It took Mrs. Pepys a long time to forgive him, and even then it must have been a bitter memory to the end.

Months later Samuel caught a glimpse of Deb at Whitehall; he spoke to her and there followed another meeting, during which they arranged to see each other once more in Westminster Hall, but this did not materialize and, with the exception of passing her at the Temple Gate when Mrs. Pepys was present, he never saw her again, only hearing that she had gone to a tanner's at Greenwich.

On November 30th Mrs. Pepys rode for the first time alone in her coach, and called on various relatives and friends.

In February, 1669, she helped Samuel to entertain the two young daughters of Cousin Roger Pepys, Barbara and Betty. There were visits to the Playhouse and to Bedlam, to Westminster Abbey and Whitehall, and music and

dancing and a supper party at a tavern in Fleet Street.

The Pepys celebrated the first of May by taking their coach into Hyde Park and joining in the fashionable parade of going amaying.

The coach had been newly varnished and painted yellow, with gilded window frames and standards, and the pair of fine black horses had their manes and tails tied with red ribbons, while the coachman, in a livery of green lined with red, handled a pair of green reins. . . .

Owing to his impaired eyesight Samuel ceased writing his Diary on the 31st. . . .

Some time later he and his wife went abroad, travelling in France and Holland. They returned to London in October, and immediately upon her arrival Elizabeth became seriously ill. From the first her case was considered hopeless. She died on November 10th, receiving the Holy Sacrament " according to the rites of the Church of England, upon her death-bed, few houres before her decease, in the year 1669."

HER CHURCH

When we visit the old City Church of St. Olave's, Hart Street, we see one of the most familiar settings of Mrs. Pepys's life. Nowhere else do our memories of her seem as vivid, for we have but to group a few of them together and she stands before us—a picture in a perfect frame.

Samuel's memorial to her is surmounted by her bust, a fine, life-like piece of work. The face is young and rounded, its youthfulness enhanced by the simplicity of the hairdressing, and all seems in strange contrast to the carven skulls below it. Most fittingly she turns towards the place once occupied by the Navy Pew, and where now is seen Samuel's own monument, erected in 1884.

Her memorial bears the following inscription:

H . S . E

CUI

Cunas dedit Somersetia, Octob: 23, 1640.

Patrem e præclarâ familiâ de St. Michel, ANDEGAVIA,

Matrem e nobili Stirpe Cliffodorum, CUMBRIA,

ELIZABETHA PEPYS,

Samuelis Pepys (Classi Regiæ ab Actis) Uxor.

Quae in Cœnobio primum, Aulâ dein educata Gallica,
Utriusque unà claruit virtutibus,
Formâ, Artibus, Linguis, cultissima.
Prolem enixa, quia parem non potuit, nullam.
Huic demum placidè cum valedixerat
(Confecto per amaeniora ferè Europae itenere)
Potiorem abiit redux lustratura mundum.

Anno { *Obiit 10 Novembris,*
Aetatis 29
Conjugii 15
Domini 1669

Arms.—Sable, on a Bend Or, between two Nags' Heads erased Argent, three Fleurs de Lis of the first; impaling Ermine, three Roses.

The translation:

HERE LIES

ELIZABETH PEPYS

TO WHOM

Somerset gave her cradle, Octob: 23, 1640,

Andegavia gave
Her Father of the glorious house of St. Michel,

Cumbria gave
Her Mother of the noble stock of the Cliffords,

Wife of Samuel Pepys (who serves the Royal Navy).

She was educated first in a convent, and then in a seminary of France.
She was distinguished by the excellence of both at once,
Gifted with beauty, accomplishments, tongues,
She bore no offspring, for she could not have borne her like.
At length when she had bidden this world a gentle farewell,
(After a journey completed through, we may say, the lovelier sights of Europe)—
A returning pilgrim, she took her departure to wander through a grander world,

She died on the 10th of November,
In the 29th year of her age,
In the 15th year of her marriage,
In the year of Our Lord 1669.

Soon after he came to live in the Navy Office Samuel interested himself in the building of a gallery for the use of the officers and their wives. An old picture of St. Olave's shows that when it was finished, this gallery was approached by means of an outside staircase. There were

many disputes regarding precedence in the order of seating.

Samuel was anxious that his wife should be a very well-dressed member of the congregation, especially at Easter and Whitsuntide, and some of her Sunday garments were most attractive, as for instance, her green flowered satin petticoat trimmed with lace, and her yellow bird's-eye hood.

Even in church he could not overcome his jealousy, for the sight of a handsome captain in a gold laced suit prompted him to dispatch Elizabeth to a christening.

The parson and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Milles, were occasionally entertained to dinner in Seething Lane. Elizabeth was godmother to their son, and the following notice appears in the Registers:—"1667, Nov. 21st. Daniell sonn of Mr. Daniell Miles Rectr. and Mrs. Mary his wife was baptized Privatly Sunday Ye 17th instant and Thursday ffollowing Publiquely in Ye Church; on wch occasion Mr. Gifford Preached; Ye Godfathers Weare Sr. John Minns and Sr. Robert Brookes, Ye Godmothr Madam Pepys."

With her usual frankness in such matters, she confided to Samuel that Sir Robert Brookes had paid her much attention and had been "mighty civil" to her during the ceremony.

There were some quaint customs at St. Olave's, the prettiest being that of decorating the Navy Pew at Christmas with rosemary and bays.

A great many victims of the Plague were buried in the churchyard, and no doubt Elizabeth shared her husband's relief when the mounds were hidden by the snow.

. . . . . .

If one has read thus far, perhaps the young face above the altar will receive a kindly glance, a passing thought—the tributes she loved best in life.

Chapter 1 (Page 14) Sir Edward Mountague, born 1625, died in action against the Dutch in Southwold Bay, May 28th, 1672. He was the son of Sir Sidney Mountague, by Paulina, daughter of John Pepys of Cottenham. He married Jemima, daughter of Sir John Crew of Stene. He was appointed Master of Trinity House, Master of the Wardrobe, Admiral, Ambassador to Spain, etc.

Chapter 11 (Page 74) John Hales—a celebrated portrait painter, contemporary and rival of Sir Peter Lely. Died 1679.

Chapter 8 (Page 58) Bartholomew Fair was held in Smithfield. It was discontinued in 1855.

Chapter 7 (Page 50) Mary Davis, dancer and comedienne at the Duke's Playhouse. She left the stage to become a Court favourite.

Chapter 10 (Page 66) Lady Pen and her daughter Margaret, wife and child of Admiral Sir William Pen, Commissioner for the Navy.

Chapter 8 (Page 58) The King's Playhouse and the Duke's Playhouse. The former, under the management of Sir Thomas Killigrew, was at first in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and then removed to Drury Lane. The Duke's Playhouse, under Sir William Davenant, was also in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Chapter 11 (Page 78) Samuel Cooper, 1609-1672. Linguist, musician, and one of the most famous of English miniature painters.

Chapter 12 (Page 85) *Classi Regiae ab Actis*, a sentence of equivocal significance.

Chapter 1 (Page 14) Samuel's grandfather and Sir Edward's mother were brother and sister.

Chapter 2 (Page 18) Although John Pepys was a tailor, he belonged to a substantial family long established in Cambridgeshire.

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